



EPA Announces Investigation Results at Pines Site

Town of Pines
Pines, Indiana

January 2003

This fact sheet provides information about:

- Pines Ground-Water Plume Site
- Investigation results
- Questions asked during the October community interviews
- Next steps
- Contact information

Mark your calendars

EPA and its partner, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, will present complete results of the testing and discuss the next steps at a public meeting. The meeting will be held:

Date: February 4, 2003

Time: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Place: Michigan City Public Library
100 East 4th Street
Michigan City, Indiana

Next steps

- Construction will begin in the spring
- EPA and Indiana DEM will begin negotiations with the responsible parties for continued work at the site

Results of investigation

Testing of water supplies in the Town of Pines, Ind., has discovered about 130 homes with contaminated wells. The homes affected by the underground pollution are located in two areas. One section is between Liberty and Ash streets, and U.S. 12 and 20. The other, smaller area is located between Columbia and Idaho streets and U.S. 12 and East Johns Street.

Wells in these two areas were found with high levels of the chemicals **boron** and **molybdenum**. These chemicals probably come from fly ash disposed at a landfill called Yard 520 near Pines. Fly ash is a result of burning coal to make electricity. The amounts of these pollutants in the drinking water are higher than levels considered safe. EPA says connecting homes in the two affected areas to the Michigan City, Ind., water system should protect people from the pollution. EPA expects NIPSCO utility and Brown Inc., to pay for the hook-ups. The connections should be completed by next December.

Well monitoring shows the two pollutants have moved north from Yard 520. Currently there are no plans to connect homes outside the two affected areas to the water system. No contamination was found in wells out of the two neighborhoods. The main water line running from Michigan City is large enough to allow many additional homes in the vicinity of the water line to connect. There is also consideration being given to “oversizing” the line to allow other communities to be able to connect providing financial consideration can be worked out.

Effective January 24, 2003, EPA and the two companies signed the Administrative Order by Consent. Now that the legal order is signed, construction should begin after engineering work and access agreements are made.

Indiana DEM has asked EPA to place the Pines site on its National Priorities List. Getting on that list takes a long time. Indiana DEM are currently in the process of completing the documentation needed.

Questions asked during the October 2002 community interviews

Following are the answers to the most frequently asked questions during the interviews. They are not presented in any specific order.

Will EPA test residential wells outside the sampling area and in the “buffer” zones?

Not in this phase of the project. As part of the Consent Order that EPA expects the responsible parties to sign, there is a provision for those responsible and the Indiana DEM to monitor the plume movement. EPA and the Indiana DEM will negotiate with the responsible parties for additional work, which could include additional testing.

Will EPA provide bottled water to residents in the “buffer zone”?

EPA is currently providing bottled to 30 homes in the two areas of concern due to high levels of contamination. Homes in the buffer zone do not have contaminated wells and therefore will not receive bottled water.

When will EPA start to remediate the landfill?

There is no timetable set at this point. Again, EPA and the Indiana DEM will negotiate with the responsible parties to set a timetable to begin investigations, which is the first step.

Is there a timetable for the Michigan City water connection?

Yes. As stated in the Order, the project must be completed by December 1, 2003. Any road repair, well abandonment, and landscaping can take until June 1, 2004 to complete.

Has EPA identified the “main area of concern”?

See results of investigation on page 1.

Will any of the wells be retested?

Not as part of this phase of the project. EPA and the Indiana DEM will be negotiating the next steps with the responsible parties. These steps may include testing of new homes and retesting of previously tested wells.

Will EPA or someone monitor the landfills and dumps?

This is unknown at this time. However, this could also be a part of the investigation that will be negotiated with the responsible parties.

Will Beverly Shores’ residents get their water tested or be able to connect to the municipal water connection?

Beverly Shores is not part of the Pines project. Any interest to have residential wells tested should be relayed to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. There is a possibility that the water line running from Michigan City to the western extent of the Pines project will be oversized to accommodate Beverly Shores. However, the responsible parties are not being required to pay for that oversize.

Who is going to pay for the water hook-ups?

The cost of the water mains and the residential connections in the affected areas will be paid for by the responsible parties.

When will the site be on the NPL?

Indiana DEM received approval from the governor and the commissioner to proceed with the necessary steps to place the Pines site on the NPL. They are currently in the process of completing the hazard ranking system documentation.

Town of Pines Ground-Water Plume Site

Location

The site is located approximately 2 miles west of Michigan City, Ind., and 2 miles south of Lake Michigan. The area of concern that constitutes the Pines Site is bordered by U.S. Highway 12 (W. Dunes Highway) to the north, Maine Avenue to the east, S. Railroad Avenue to the south, and Pine Street to the west.

Milestones

2000

April	Indiana DEM receives complaint from Pines resident that water from her private well tastes foul.
May	Indiana DEM samples well; results reveal presence of several volatile organic compounds, including benzene.
June	Indiana DEM samples additional residential wells and provides carbon filters to residents whose well water exceed benzene MCL.
August	EPA and Indiana DEM agree Pines site warrants Superfund site investigation.
Fall	Indiana DEM conducts additional sampling; results show various wells contaminated with elevated levels of benzene, arsenic, and manganese.

2001

Spring	EPA obtains permission from home and business owners to sample wells in site area. Four rounds of sampling were conducted. Previous sampling results were confirmed; elevated levels of MTBE were identified.
May	EPA completes removal assessment.
July	Indiana DEM collects drinking water samples from about 30 private wells in the area; sampling results indicate water in three other residential wells contain lead. These residents were given filters to remove the lead.
September	Indiana DEM sampled ground water in residential wells and monitoring wells near one of the area landfills. Elevated levels of boron, manganese and molybdenum were also detected in some residential wells.

2002

January	Indiana DEM recommends site for National Priorities List.
May	EPA conducts additional sampling of residential and monitoring wells; serious contamination is found and bottled water is provided to homes where wells are contaminated.
July	EPA conducts public meeting to explain site activities; well sampling continues and additional wells are found to be contaminated; additional homes are provided. Bottled water list grows.
October	EPA conducts community interviews to assess residents' concerns, and completes sampling and review of data.
November	EPA receives sampling results from the monitoring wells in Yard 520, which shows a northerly flow of ground water from Yard 520 indicating Yard 520 is a source of contamination. EPA starts negotiating with responsible parties to cover the costs of the clean up and water hookups.

2003

January	An "Administrative Order by Consent" is signed with the responsible parties. This requires those responsible to perform the work as outlined by EPA. This also starts the engineering work needed prior to actual construction. EPA will continue to provide bottled water until hookups are completed.
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Contact information

If you would like additional information about the site, please contact the following people at EPA:

Janet Pope Community Involvement Coordinator Office of Public Affairs (P-19J) (312) 353-0628 pope.janet@epa.gov	Ken Theisen On-Scene Coordinator Emergency Response Branch Superfund Division (SE-5J) (312) 886-1959 theisen.kenneth@epa.gov	Jan Pels Early Action Project Manager Emergency Response Branch Superfund Division (SE-4J) (312) 886-3009 pels.jan@epa.gov
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U.S. EPA, 77 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, IL 60604-3590
toll-free (800) 621-8431

Or you may contact the following individuals:

Mark Jaworski Project Manager Indiana Department of Environmental Management 100 N. Senate Avenue, P.O. Box 6015 Indianapolis, IN 46206 (317) 233-2407 mjaworsk@dem.state.in.us	Mark Johnson Senior Environmental Health Scientist ATSDR 77 W. Jackson Blvd. (ATSD-4J) Chicago, IL 60604 (312) 886-0840
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Information repository

Pines Groundwater Site information is available for review at the following location:

Michigan City Public Library 100 East 4 th Street Michigan City, IN 46360 (219) 873-3044	Monday - Thursday Friday and Saturday Sunday (Labor Day to Memorial Day; closed during the summer)	9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
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